

LA YTS

Louisiana Youth Tobacco Survey

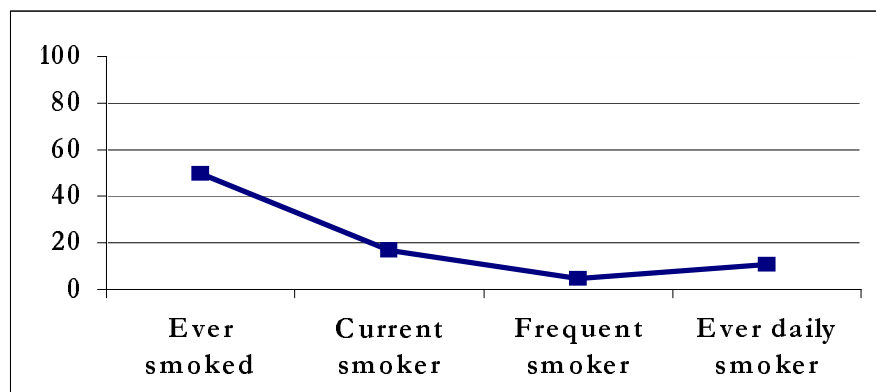
Results from the Year 2000 Survey



Tobacco Control Program
Chronic Disease Epidemiology Unit

Smoking Prevalence among Louisiana Public Middle School Students 2000

- Fifty percent of Louisiana public middle school students have ever smoked cigarettes; That translates into more than 17,000 sixth, 25,000 seventh and 30,000 eighth grade students (for a total of 72,000 Louisiana youth) who have tried or experimented with cigarette smoking.
- Six out of 10 public middle school students have ever used any form of tobacco.
- Almost 20% of Louisiana youth have smoked cigarettes on one or more of the past 30 days. One out of 4 have used some form of tobacco in the past 30 days.



Risk perception varies by Race

African-American public middle school students are less likely to have ever tried smoking, or to be a current, frequent, or daily smoker compared to their white counterparts. African-Americans are also less likely to report intentions to smoke.

However, risk perceptions and attitudes regarding tobacco and tobacco use are not consistent with tobacco use patterns and intentions to use. African-American boys (70.6%) and girls (81.8%) were much less likely than white boys (89.6%) and girls (93.5%) to think that people can get addicted to using tobacco. African-American

public middle school students were also more likely to report lower perceptions of risk. They were less likely to think young people risk harming themselves if they smoke between 1 – 5 cigarettes per day; to think smoke from other people's cigarettes is harmful to them; and to think it is not safe to smoke for a year or two, as long as you quit after that.

Clearly, even though African-American middle school students have a lower prevalence of tobacco use, they have a lower perception of the harm from tobacco use than their fellow white students.

Environmental Tobacco Smoke

- 61.0% Of LA public middle school students were in the same room with someone who was smoking cigarettes on 1+ days during the past 7 days
- 50.8% Of students rode in a car with someone who was smoking cigarettes on 1+ days during the past 7 days
- 48.9% Of LA public middle school students live with someone who currently smokes

Did you know?

- Fifty percent of LA public middle school students have ever smoked.
- Over 7,000 (5%) LA middle school students smoked cigarettes on school property during the past 30 days.
- 32% of current smokers smoked in the morning of the survey.
- 6 out of 10 who do smoke want to quit.
- Only 45% practiced ways to say 'NO' to tobacco at school this year.

Attitudes about Tobacco Use

Most adult smokers began smoking as adolescents. A young person’s knowledge and attitudes about smoking appear to be major influences on smoking initiation. Other studies also indicate that having a friend who smokes predicts adolescent smoking.

Public middle school students in Louisiana are less likely to think smoking is socially acceptable. There are still a large number of youth who think smoking is okay.

- Twenty-nine percent think young people who smoke cigarettes have more friends
- One out of 5 think smoking cigarettes makes young people look cool or fit in

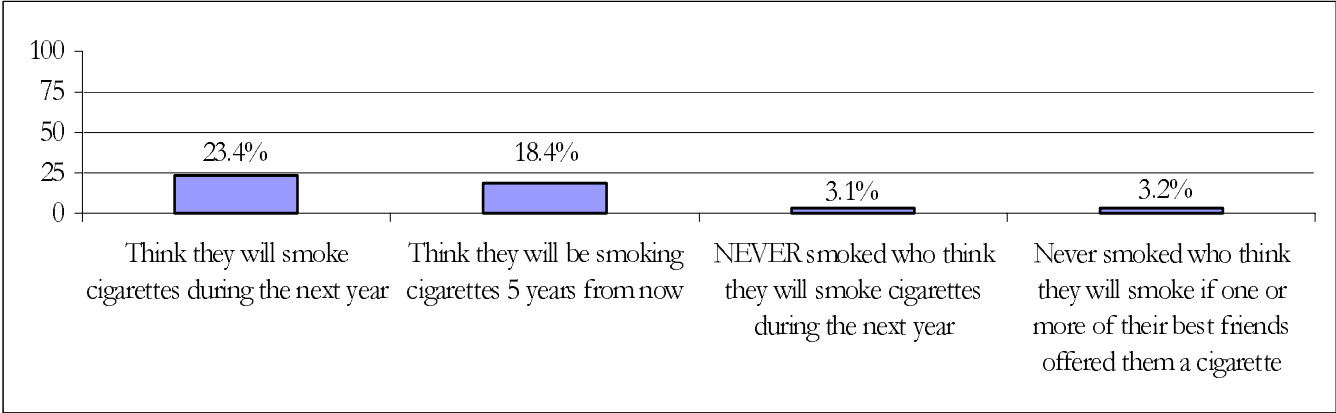
- Almost half of Louisiana youth have one or more smokers among their four closest friends



Changing these social attitudes is important to decrease the number of adolescent smokers in Louisiana. Students need to be reminded of the harmful effects of smoking, and they need to participate in programs that teach them how to say ‘NO’ to tobacco. Seventy percent had been told by at least one parent or guardian about the dangers of tobacco use. This message needs to be reinforced by principals, teachers and the community.

Use a variety of techniques to communicate the dangers of smoking

Intentions to Smoke



Where did this information come from?

The YTS used a two-stage cluster sample design to produce a representative sample of students in Louisiana public middle schools. A list of all public middle schools (Grades 6-8) in Louisiana was obtained and 50 schools were randomly selected. After the schools agreed to participate, a list of second period classes was obtained. Classes were randomly selected from this list and all students in the selected classes were eligible to participate. Classes excluded were special education and English as a second language.

Passive permission was obtained to participate. On the selected survey date, students completed a self-administered survey by recording their answers on a Scantron sheet. Seventy-five questions were on the survey. Sixty-three core questions were related to prevalence of tobacco use, age of

initiation, access to tobacco products, cessation activities, knowledge and attitudes about tobacco use, mass media influences and environmental tobacco smoke. Twelve additional State-added questions asked about physical activity asthma prevalence.

For the LA YTS, 82.52% of schools (35 of the 48 sampled schools) and 72.92% of students within the schools responded to yield a combined response rate of 60.18%. Therefore, the results can be applied to all Louisiana public middle school students.

“With help from the Louisiana Department of Education, Principals and Students, we know much more about Louisiana youth tobacco use.”